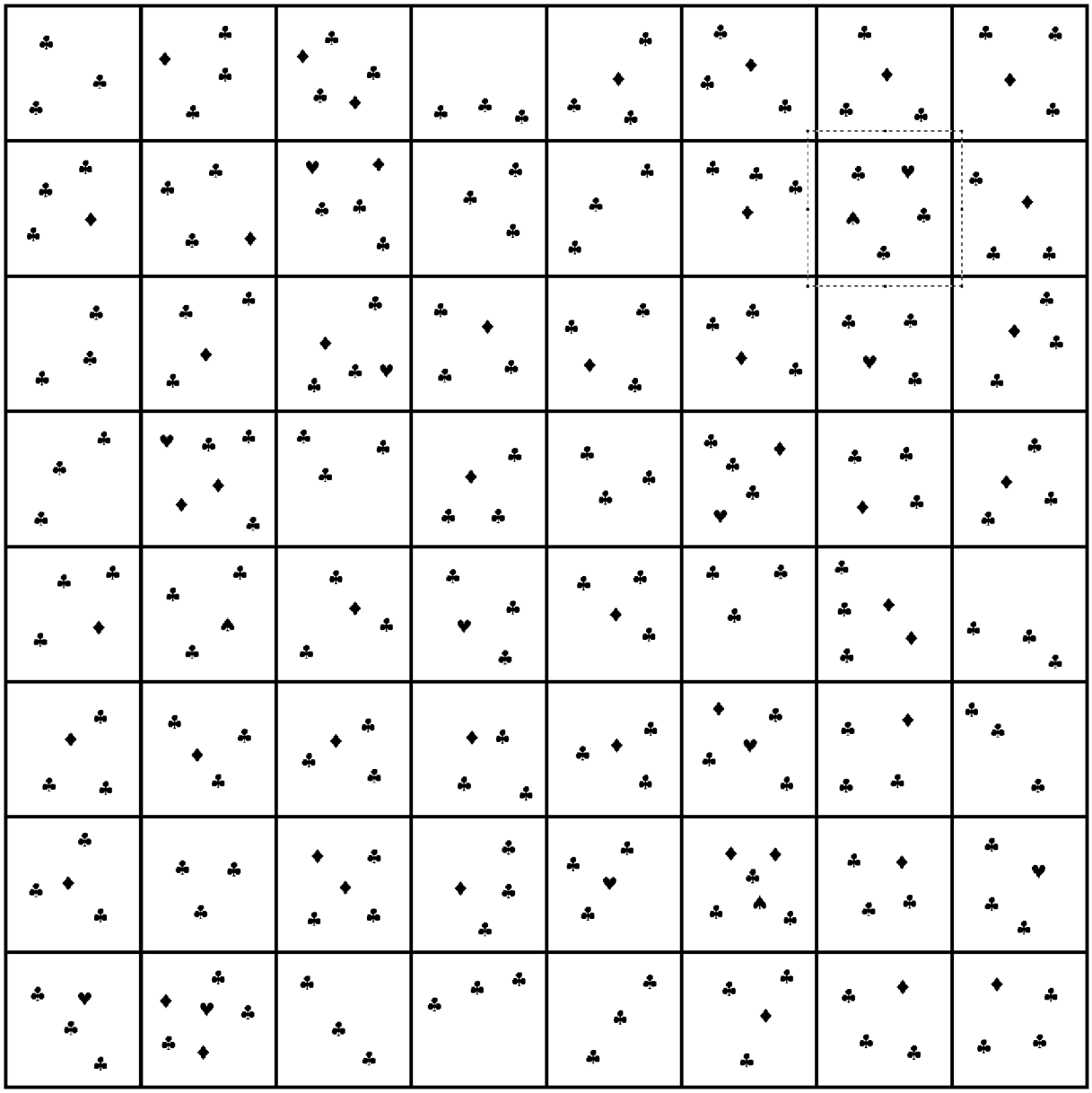
REMARKS

The Office Action dated April 17, 2006 has been received and carefully considered. No amendments to the claims have been made at this time. For reasons discussed in detail below, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections set forth in the Office Action are improper and that the pending claims are allowable over the cited prior art. Accordingly, careful reconsideration of the rejections, in light of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Before discussing the cited prior art, the applicant wishes to remind the Examiner of several important features of the present invention, along with the advantages of the invention achieved by these claimed features.

In particular, with reference to the figures provided below, further explanations of the present invention shall be presented, highlighting the claimed features of "fractionalizing advertisement areas into increasingly more specific geographic regions" within a multi-level storage hierarchy, and of "categorizing the advertisements" according to the content thereof.

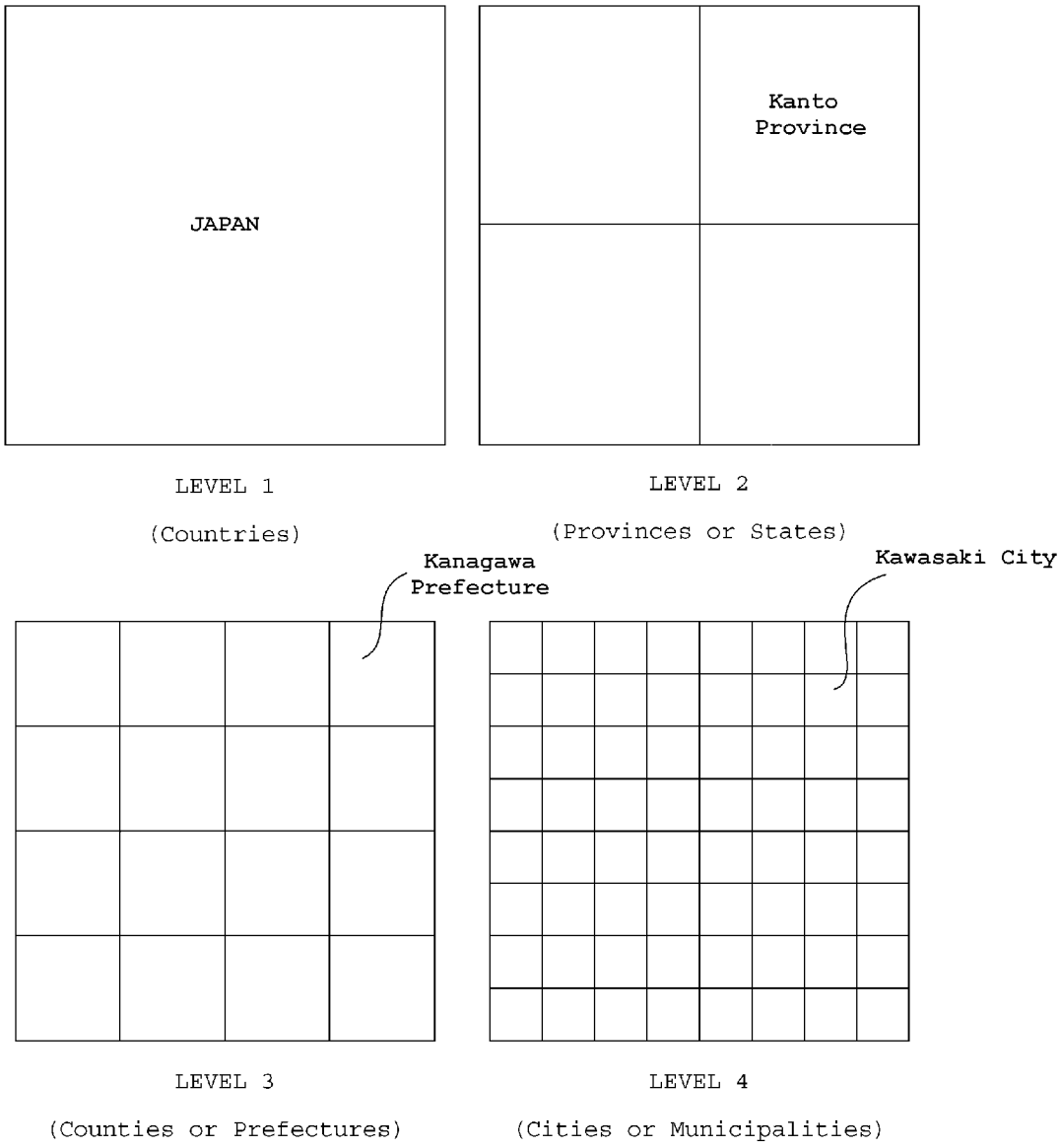


Advertisement Category	Advertisement Density
♣ Advertisements	Very High
♦ Advertisements	High
♥ Advertisements	Low
♠ Advertisements	Very Low

Categorizing of Advertisements

In the grid shown above, the claimed feature of "categorizing the advertisements according to content thereof" is indicated by suit symbols, wherein clubs (♣) represent job advertisements that are categorized as having very high density, that is, advertisements for unskilled positions such as waitresses, for which there are a great number of positions available, distributed almost evenly across the entire country region. Further, diamonds (♦) represent job advertisements that are categorized as having high density, for positions requiring moderate skill, for example hairdressers, for which there are fewer positions available than for the clubs (♣) category, but which still are fairly widely available. Hearts (♥) represent job advertisements that are categorized as having low density, for positions requiring professional skills, such as lawyers or engineers, for which there are relatively few positions available, in only certain regions of the country. Spades (♠) represent job advertisements that are categorized as having very low density, for highly skilled professional positions such as surgeons or university professors, for which very few positions are available. In the example given above, only three such categorized positions are available within the entire country region.

In the following descriptions, we shall be focusing on the grid region indicated in the upper right corner, which is designated as representing Kawasaki City, in Kanagawa Prefecture, in the Kanto Province of Japan.


JAPAN
Kanto
Province
LEVEL 1
(Countries)
LEVEL 2
(Provinces or States)
Kanagawa
Prefecture
Kawasaki City
LEVEL 3
(Counties or Prefectures)
LEVEL 4
(Cities or Municipalities)

Fractionalization of Advertisement Areas

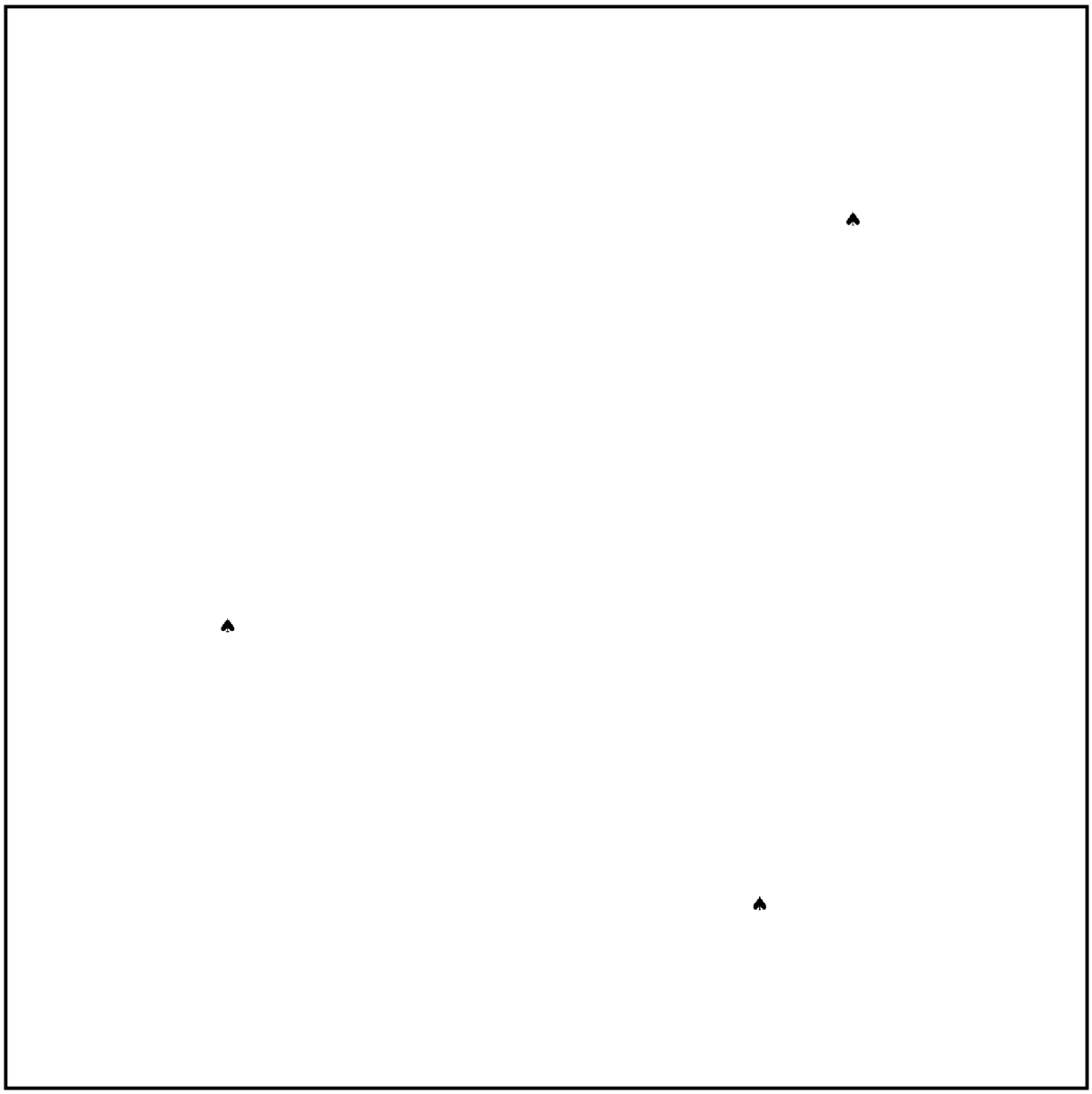
Next, the claimed feature of different area levels provided in the multilevel storage hierarchy, which are subject to geographic fractionalization, shall be explained.

First, as indicated in the figure above, Level 1 fractionalization pertains to an entire country region, for example, all of Japan. By contrast, Level 2 fractionalization pertains to provinces or states within the country, for example, the Kanto Province in Japan. Schematically, in the above figures, Level 2 is represented by 4 x 4 individual block sub-sections, four of which are contained within the overall 8 x 8 grid shown above. Next, Level 3 fractionalization pertains to counties or prefectures that lie within a state or province, for example, Kanagawa Prefecture, which is located in the Kanto Province of Japan. In the above figures, Level 3 is represented by 2 x 2 individual block sub-sections, sixteen of which are contained within the overall 8 x 8 grid shown above. Finally, Level 4 fractionalization pertains to cities or municipalities that lie within a county or prefecture, for example, Kawasaki City, which is located in the Kanagawa Prefecture of Japan. In the above figures, Level 4 is represented by each of the individual block sub-sections, sixty-four of which are contained within the overall grid shown above.

The Present Invention

The invention functions by establishing an association or linkage between advertisement categories (♣,♦,♥,♠) and the level of fractionalization in the claimed storage hierarchy. For example, job advertisements of the spades (♠) category having very low density are linked with Level 1 area sections, job advertisements of the hearts (♥) category having low density are linked with Level 2 area sections, job advertisements of the diamonds (♦) category having high density are linked with Level 3 area sections, and job advertisements of the clubs (♣) category having very high density are linked with Level 4 area sections.

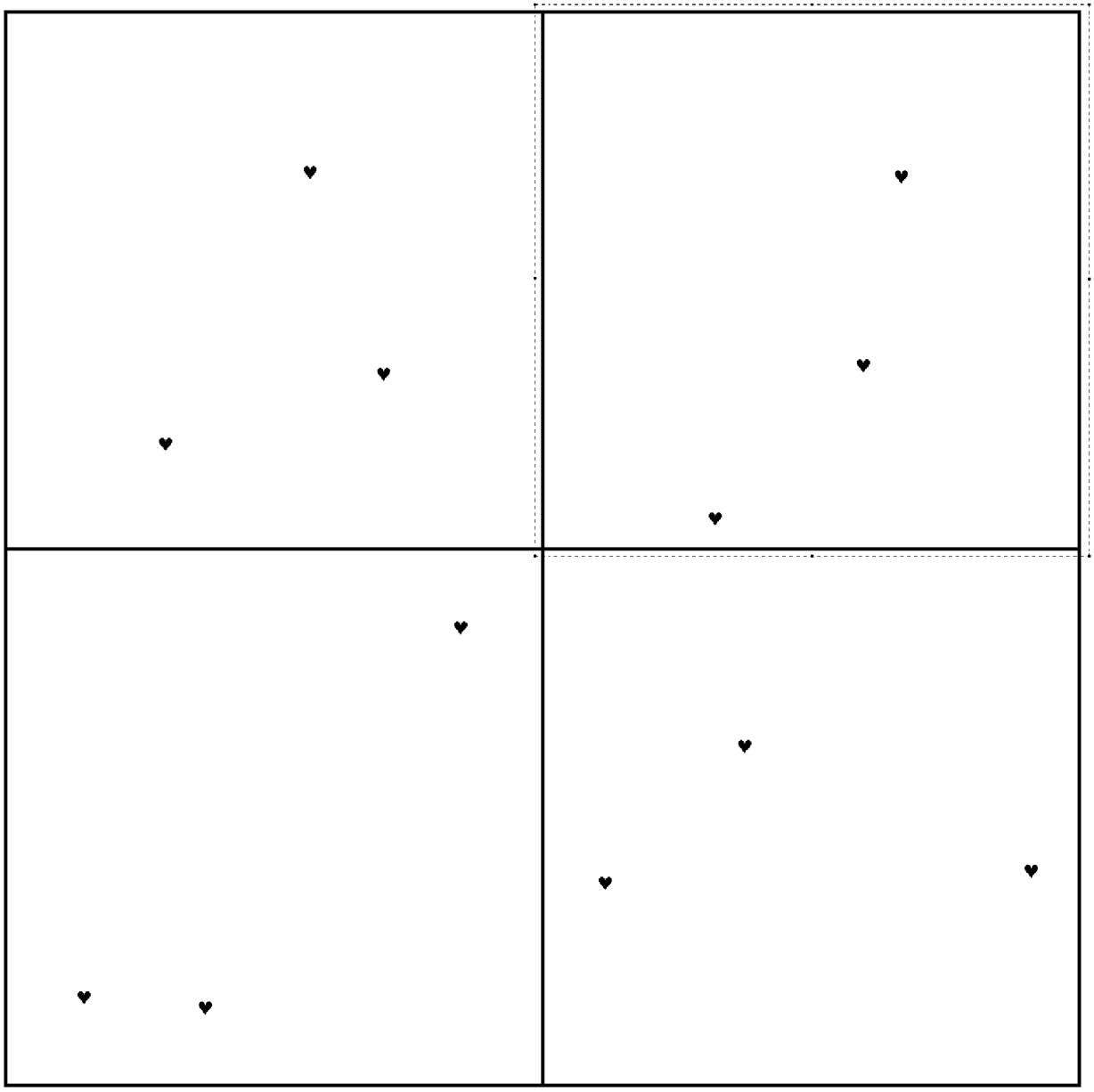
Therefore, as an example, when a user initiates a search for jobs in the spades (♠) category, for example for university professorships of which very few jobs exist, the present invention automatically and adaptively links this search with the Level 1 degree of fractionalization, so that the search is conducted over the entire country region. Therefore, as shown below, the number of displayed advertisements at Level 1 is three.



♠ CATEGORY JOBS AT LEVEL 1

Note that had this same search for spades (♠) category jobs been conducted at Levels 2, 3 or 4, there is a possibility that no hits would have occurred. Moreover, if the search were conducted for clubs (♣) category jobs at Level 1, the number of

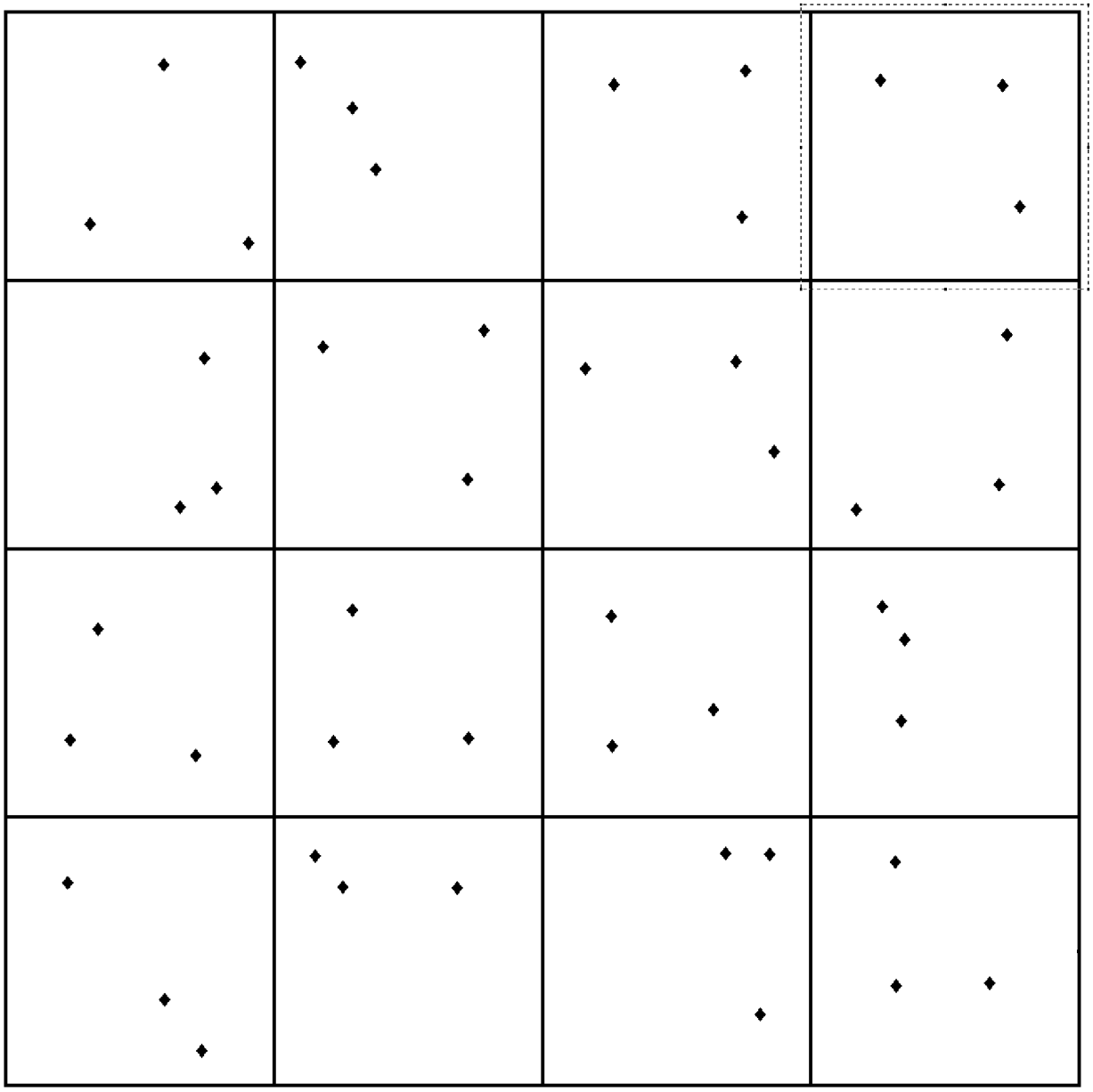
job advertisements would be 192, which is too excessive for the user to view conveniently on a portable mobile terminal.



♥ CATEGORY JOBS AT LEVEL 2

Next, as shown above, if the user conducts a search for jobs belonging to the hearts (♥) category, the claimed invention

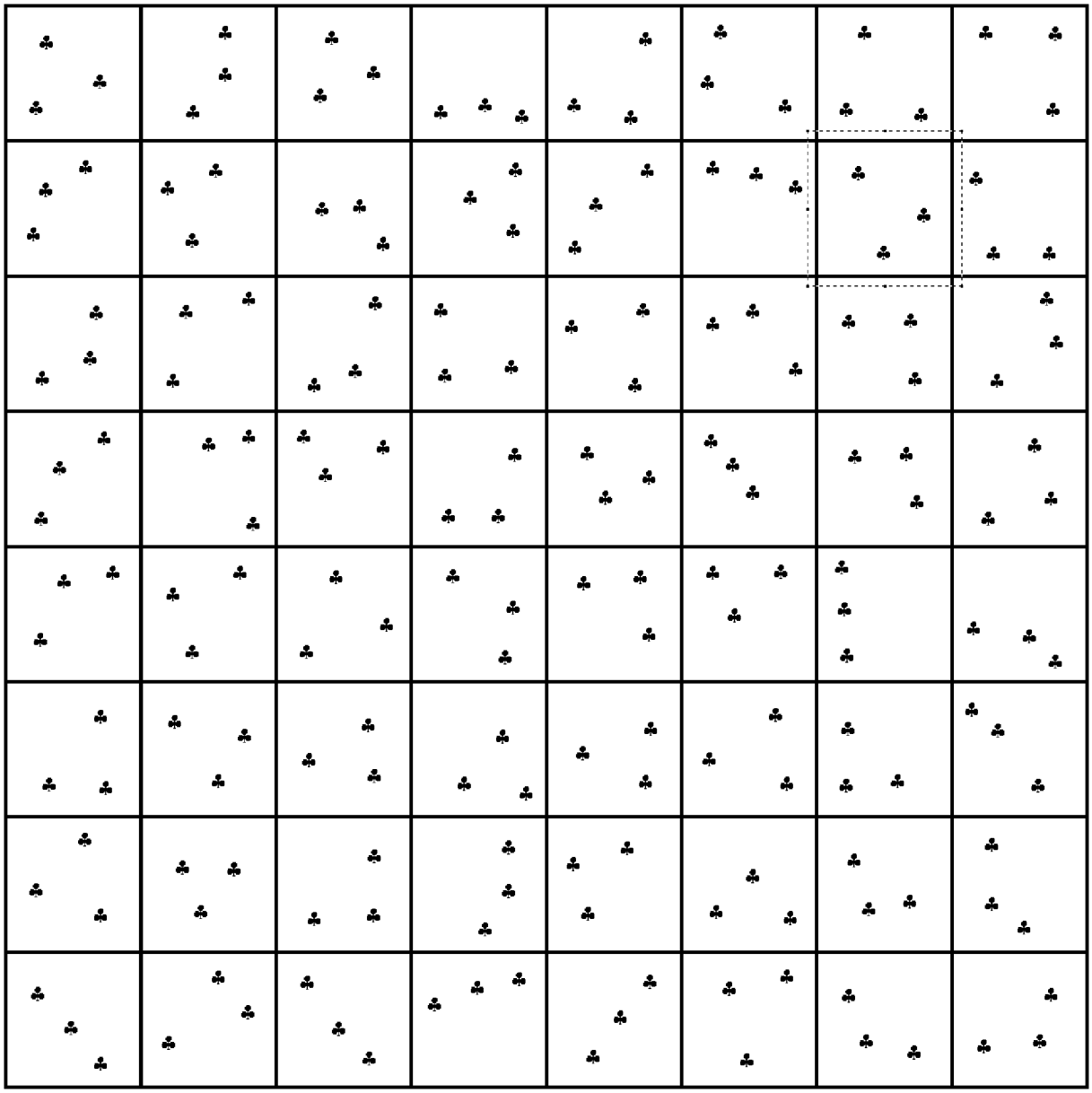
operates to link this search with a Level 2 area section (e.g., Kanto Province of Japan), so that again, three job advertisements will be made available to the user for viewing.



♦ CATEGORY JOBS AT LEVEL 3

Next, as shown above, if the user conducts a search for jobs belonging to the diamonds (♦) category, the claimed

invention operates to link this search with a Level 3 area section (e.g., Kanagawa Prefecture in the Kanto Province of Japan), so that again, three job advertisements will be made available to the user for viewing.



♣ CATEGORY JOBS AT LEVEL 4

Finally, as shown above, if the user conducts a search for jobs belonging to the clubs (♣) category, for job advertisements having very high density, the invention operates to link this search with a Level 4 area section (e.g., Kawasaki City in Kanagawa Prefecture in the Kanto Province of Japan), so that again, in the above example, three job advertisements will be made available to the user for viewing.

In each of the instances described above, the important and central aspects of the present invention are as follows:

1) The advertisements are categorized based on their content and placed in a category (♣,♦,♥,♠) indicative of the density of advertisements occurring across a geographic region.
2) A multi-level storage hierarchy is provided, each level defining an increasingly more specific degree of geographic fractionalization.
3) The system associates the categorized jobs with respective levels in the storage hierarchy, so that when the user performs a search, the scope of the search will be conducted at the appropriate level of fractionalization, so that a reasonable number of hits (neither too few nor too many) will be returned.

In the current Office Action, claims 1 to 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wachtfogel et al., cited previously, in view of Bandera et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,332,127).

The applicant respectfully submits that the current rejection of record is improper and without basis. Specifically,

the newly cited secondary reference, Bandera et al., clearly does not make up for the admitted deficiencies of the primary reference, Wachtfogel et al.

In particular, as in the previous Office Actions, in the current Office Action, page 3, lines 13 to 17, the Examiner openly admits that "Wachtfogel et al. fail to teach an inventive concept wherein advertisements are arranged into more specific geographic area[s] by categorizing the advertisements as to belong to respective levels of geographic fractionalization within a multi-level storage hierarchy, categorizing the advertisements according to area sections within respective levels, and categorizing the advertisements according to content thereof."

However, the newly cited reference, Bandera et al., does not make up for the admitted deficiencies of Wachtfogel et al. Despite the Examiner's indication of a section in this reference, which is alleged to disclose the above features, it is quite clear that Bandera et al. does not even remotely suggest the structure of the claimed storage hierarchy, in which advertisements are arranged within different storage levels (e.g., Levels 1 to 4 discussed above and as shown in FIG. 2 of the present specification) having increasingly more specific geographic fractionalization. With respect to this feature, the Examiner has referred to column 2, lines 3 to 42, of Bandera et al. (see, current Office Action, page 3, lines 18 to 22).

Bandera et al. concerns a system for selecting advertising objects (i.e., banner advertisements) to be displayed within a

web page requested by a user based on the geographic location of the user and/or on the time of day. More specifically, so-called "banner advertisements" may be included within a web page displayed on a mobile web client such as a PDA or cell phone, consistent with actual geographic information of the person viewing the web page. Such geographic information is obtained via the mobile web client, which transmits GPS (global positioning system) information of the user together with the web page request. Accordingly, when the requested web page is displayed on the mobile web client, banner advertisements can be displayed within the web page, wherein the banner advertisements are from businesses targeting the location of the user.

The section of the cited reference (column 2, lines 3-42) highlighted by the Examiner refers to background information pertinent to the features discussed above.

However, the indicated section of Bandera et al. does not disclose the claimed feature of a "storing means comprising a multi-level storage hierarchy for storing advertisements, in which the levels of said multi-level storage hierarchy gradually fractionalize advertisement areas into increasingly more specific geographic regions." That is, the cited reference does not disclose the hierarchical storage structure illustrated in FIG. 2, in which each lower level further subdivides or fractionalizes the geographic regions into increasingly more specific smaller geographic regions (i.e., level 1 countries → level 2 provinces or states → level 3 counties or prefectures → level 4 cities or municipalities). Moreover, lacking the claimed hierarchical

storage structure, it is a foregone conclusion that Bandera et al. cannot suggest the claimed feature of "categorizing advertisements so as to belong to respective levels of geographic fractionalization within said multi-level storage hierarchy."

As before, the applicant strongly emphasizes that neither of the cited references shows any appreciation of the aim of the present invention, which is to adaptively adjust the number of job or help-wanted advertisements made available for display, depending on the category or type of job being sought.

According to the present invention, job advertisements for highly skilled positions, for example, university professorships, are categorized in the first level having a lowest level of geographic fractionalization defined by respective country area sections. Therefore, if one were to search for such job advertisements, even though few or no jobs fitting this category may exist within a confined local region such as the user's own city, still an appropriate number of different job advertisements can be displayed, since the advertisements are culled from a much wider geographic area. On the other hand, job advertisements for unskilled positions, for example, jobs for waitresses, are categorized, e.g., in the fourth level of geographic fractionalization defined by cities or municipalities. Therefore, when searching for such job advertisements, only those advertisements from the user's selected city region are displayed, so that the user is not flooded with an overabundance of job advertisements. In either case, depending on the type of jobs being sought, by linking the type of job being sought with the

proper level of geographic fractionalization, an appropriate and reasonable number of job advertisements are made available for viewing.

In particular, the features of the claimed invention are of great utility for job searching using small portable mobile terminals, such as cellular phones, where the amount of information that can be displayed is limited by screen size. By adaptively controlling the amount of information made available depending on the category of jobs being sought (i.e., by categorizing the job advertisements based on job types within a multi-level storage hierarchy having different geographically fractionalized levels), the present invention enables more effective use of Internet connected portable mobile terminals for job hunting activities.

By contrast, Bandera et al. only concerns displaying banner adds within a web page based on GPS information indicating the actual location of the user. There is no hint of the essential "categorizing advertisements" and "geographic fractionalization" features of the claimed invention.

In fact, according to Bandera et al., since the advertisements supplied to each user are limited to the actual location of the user, unlike the present invention, users do not even receive advertisements from regions outside of their actual location. Thus, for example, in the case of very low density advertisements, such as discussed above, unless the user just happened to reside in the correct city location, the user could never obtain these advertisements. Therefore, it is quite

apparent that Bandera et al. cannot achieve the same effects and advantages as the claimed invention.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claimed invention would not have been obvious to a person skilled in the art at the time the present invention was made. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections, and allowance of pending claims 1 to 13, is respectfully requested.

No additional fees are currently due. Notwithstanding, in the event that fees, or deficiencies in fees, are deemed necessary in connection with this or any accompanying communication, such fees may be charged to the Attorney's Deposit Account 07-2519.

Respectfully submitted,

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